

of the captivity idolatry had been the besetting national sin, but after that event, whatever crimes may be laid to the charge of the Jewish nation, no image of the creature was ever again set up in the place of the Creator. Outwardly at least his law was honored and magnified, His name alone was invoked, and though the sacred fire burned no more in the Holiest place, though the visible symbol of His presence no more blazed forth from between the cherubin, nevertheless His power and His providence overshadowed the peculiar people, sustained for centuries their national life, and wrought for them a deliverance from powerful and rapacious enemies.

There is one significant note of sweetest music in the text. It is the patriotic fervor which breaks forth in the memorable words, "If I forget thee, O, Jerusalem, If I do not remember thee—If I do not prefer thee above my chief joy." It was this love of country which turned their thoughts to hearty repentance and manly virtue, which led them to earnestly study the causes of the great national disaster, and to apply in themselves the remedy which eventually restored them to their native land. Beside the love of God there is no sentiment so holy, so noble, so uplifting as the love of country. It involves all other affections, for the welfare of those who are dearer to us than life depends upon the welfare of our country. Our thought for their security and happiness, when the arm with which we now defend them has crumbled to dust, depends upon the security and happiness of our country. The blessings of liberty and independence which we enjoy will not descend to our children unless we preserve and defend the integrity of our country. Around the love of country clusters the tenderest sentiments, the noblest impulses of which the human heart is capable. Even the untutored savage when driven away from his primeval valleys, where so long he had lived a child of nature, led only by the wild and willful spirit which linked him in a bond of kinship to the undisciplined wilderness, fleeing before the strong arm which had come to fell his mighty forests, even the untutored savage would linger on some distant mountain and gaze with dull agony upon the skies and hills which he would never see again,—those calm skies which domed the wide temple of his native woods, the stars which to his thought were the eyes of the Great Father, watching over his slumbers, the hills over which he had followed the bounding deer, the sheltered vale where the smoke of his humble wigwam curled peacefully among the spreading trees. But last and longest his

gaze would linger upon the graves of his forefathers, and then his wild heart would throb with an anguish which his lips would often utter in broken but eloquent sentences.

Oh, beautiful love of country, which enshrines all that is noble and glorious in the past, and labor and hopes for all that is best in the future. Happy is that nation which can boast a long line of heroes, of great and good men, of noble and pure women. Happy is that nation whose history is illumined with the story of heroic deeds. As white robed virgins were charged to keep the lamps forever aflame in the temple of Vesta, so Patriotism lights her fires forever at the flame which in heroic ages was kindled on the altars of our country. She points our children to the mighty men and mighty deeds of the past, to that manly virtue, that splendid courage, that sublime patience, that unwavering faith, that greatness of unselfishness, the sacrifice of fame and fortune, of ease and comfort, of love and life which at once proclaims the godlike dignity of man, the bright effulgence of a nation's fame, and the stability of its foundations. And by the operation of a beneficent and eternal law, in each succeeding generation is thus reproduced those elements of character which made former generations memorable and glorious.

When we gaze at the voluntary sacrifices which have been cheerfully laid upon that altar who will not say that love of country is a sentiment, a virtue, which God has planted in the human breast. For love of country men have done all that men could do, suffered all that steadfast soul could suffer, dared all that dauntless soul could dare, faced with intrepid front all the terrors which man could marshal, as well as those darker terrors which the grim monster shakes from plutonian locks as we enter the dreadful shadow of death. It was love of country which made Arnold Winkelried, the Swiss hero, rush upon the thick forests of Austrian spikes, crying as he ran, "make way for liberty." It was love of country which put those noble words into the mouth of Nathan Hale, the revolutionary hero, as he mounted the British scaffold, "My only regret is that I have but one life to offer my country." It is love of country which has made many a fond mother and father, with hearts possessed of all the tenderest sentiments and all the keenest possibilities of suffering of which the human heart is capable, send forth perhaps an only son to all the perils of battle and all the pains of death.

And, brothers, from this contemplation of all that heroic purpose has done and tenderest heart has borne, when love of

country was the motive, we may know what is meant when we are told, "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son." We may get some better comprehension of that noblest, divinest, most heroic man who died for us, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life.

In many particulars there is a striking analogy between the beginnings of the Jewish national life and that of our own America. Like the Jews, our forefathers fled from civil servitude and religious oppression. No more remarkable and significant chapters of history can be found than the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth, the coming of Covenanters and Quakers to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, of Huguenots to the Carolinas, and of many other societies of the Reformation, who sought in the great western wilderness that rest from ceaseless and remorseless persecution, that freedom of will and freedom of conscience which for ages, inspired by the inexorable and atrocious cruelty of religious intolerance, had been denied their long suffering ancestors.

Of all the paradoxes of history none are more inexplicable, none are more astounding than the spectacle of civil and religious tyranny, of brutal intolerance, of heartless and sickening cruelty, of murder and rapine, and unspeakable outrage in the name of Him who was the very antithesis of all these horrors:—in the name of Him who was the gentlest, the purest, the most tolerant, the most generous, the noblest and best among men.

Century after century the arrogance and cruelty of an overshadowing hierarchy held on its way, unmoved by the agonized appeal of outraged humanity; crushing every aspiration or mankind toward civil liberty and spiritual light; binding captive nations to her conquering chariot wheel; hurling myriads of the helpless into the outer darkness of ignorance and superstition; gloating in unspeakable crimes; swimming in rivers of blood; converting the fairest provinces into a wilderness encumbered with ghastly ruin and unseparated dead; letting loose hell upon earth, and adding to all its horrors of licentious wickedness by deeper and more damnable iniquity; of fiendish delight in the torture of the helpless by refinements of cruelty which were enough to make devils shudder; of black despair to which the gloom of tartarus would be as the delight of paradise; until at last a cry arose from the earth so awful in its agony, so mighty in its importunate appeal, so burdened with anguish, and so earnest in its last, desperate recoil from the universal despair which hovered around the world, that the listening ear of Heaven itself was appalled at